

Environmental Protection Agency

§ 35.917-5

Act (see subpart G of this part) the Regional Administrator shall not make any grant for construction of treatment works within the area except to the designated agency.

(b) *Reports.* Where a grant has been awarded for facilities planning which is expected to require more than 1 year to complete, the grantee must submit a brief progress report to the Regional Administrator at 3-month intervals. The progress report shall contain a minimum of narrative description, and shall describe progress in completing the approved schedule of specific tasks for the project.

§ 35.917-4 Planning scope and detail.

(a) Initially, the geographic scope of step 1 grant assistance shall be based on the area delineated by the State under § 35.917-2, subject to the Regional Administrator's review. The Regional Administrator may make the preliminary delineation of the boundaries of the planning area, if the State has not done so, or may revise boundaries selected by the locality or State agency, after appropriate consultation with State and local officials.

(b) Facilities planning shall be conducted only to the extent that the Regional Administrator finds necessary in order to insure that facilities for which grants are awarded will be cost-effective and environmentally sound and to permit reasonable evaluation of grant applications and subsequent preparation of designs, construction drawings, and specifications.

§ 35.917-5 Public participation.

(a) *General.* Consistent with section 101(e) of the Clean Water Act and 40 CFR part 25, EPA, the States, and grantees shall provide for, encourage, and assist public participation in the facilities planning process and shall provide citizens with information about and opportunities to become involved in the following:

(1) The assessment of local water quality problems and needs;

(2) The identification and evaluation of locations for waste water treatment facilities and of alternative treatment technologies and systems including those which recycle and reuse waste water (including sludge), use land

treatment, reduce waste water volume, and encourage multiple use of facilities;

(3) The evaluation of social, economic, fiscal, and environmental impacts; and

(4) The resolution of other significant facilities planning issues and decisions.

(b) *Basic Public Participation Program.* Since waste water treatment facilities vary in complexity and impact upon the community, these public participation requirements institute a two-tier public participation program for facilities planning consisting of a Basic Public Participation Program, suitable for less complex projects with only moderate community impacts, and a Full-Scale Public Participation Program, for more complex projects with potentially significant community impacts. All facilities planning projects, except those that qualify for the Full-Scale Public Participation Program under paragraph (c) of this section and those exempt under paragraph (d) of this section, require the Basic Public Participation Program. In conducting the Basic Public Participation Program, the grantee shall at a minimum:

(1) Institute, and maintain throughout the facilities planning process, a public information program (including the development and use of a mailing list of interested and affected members of the public), in accordance with 40 CFR 25.4 and § 35.917-5(a).

(2) Notify and consult with the public, during the preparation of the plan of study, about the nature and scope of the proposed facilities planning project. EPA encourages the grantee to consult with the public in the selection of the professional consulting engineer.

(3) Include in the plan of study, submitted with the Step 1 grant application, a brief outline of the public participation program, noting the projected staff and budget resources which will be devoted to public participation, a proposed schedule for public participation activities, the types of consultation and informational mechanisms that will be used, and the segments of the public that the grantee has targeted for involvement.

(4) Submit to EPA, within 45 days after the date of acceptance of the Step

1 grant award, a brief Public Participation Work Plan. In addition to meeting the requirements of 40 CFR 25.11, the Work Plan shall describe the method of coordination between the appropriate Water Quality Management public participation program under subpart G of this part and the grantee's public participation program as required by 40 CFR 35.917-5(e). The grantee shall distribute the Work Plan, accompanied by a fact sheet on the project, to groups and individuals who may be interested in or affected by the project. The fact sheet shall describe the nature, scope and location of the project; identify the consulting engineer and grantee staff contact; and include a preliminary estimate of the total costs of the project, including debt service and operation and maintenance, and of the resulting charges to each affected household.

(5) Consult with the public, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.4, early in the facilities planning process when assessing the existing and future situations and identifying and screening alternatives, but before selecting alternatives for evaluation according to the Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Guidelines (see Appendix A, Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Guidelines, paragraph 5). After consulting with the public, the grantee shall prepare and distribute a responsiveness summary, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.8.

(6) Hold a meeting to consult with the public, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.6, when alternatives are largely developed but before an alternative or plan has been selected and then prepare and distribute a responsiveness summary, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.8.

(7) Hold a public hearing before final adoption of the facilities plan, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.5.

(8) Include in the final facilities plan a final responsiveness summary, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.8.

(c) *Full-Scale Public Participation Program.* (1) The Regional Administrator shall require a Full-Scale Public Participation Program for all Step 1 facilities planning projects that fulfill one or more of the following three conditions:

(i) Where EPA prepares or requires the preparation of an Environmental

Impact Statement during facilities planning under 40 CFR part 6; or

(ii) Where advanced wastewater treatment (AWT) levels, as defined in EPA guidance, may be required; or

(iii) Where the Regional Administrator determines that more active public participation in decision-making is needed because of the possibility of particularly significant effects on matters of citizen concern, as indicated by one or more of the following:

(A) Significant change in land use or impact on environmentally sensitive areas;

(B) Significant increase in the capacity of treatment facilities or interceptors, significant increase in sewered area, or construction of wholly new treatment and conveyance systems;

(C) Substantial total cost to the community or substantial increased cost to users (i.e., cost not reimbursed under the grant);

(D) Significant public controversy;

(E) Significant impact on local population growth or economic growth;

(F) Substantial opportunity for implementation of innovative or alternative wastewater treatment technologies or systems.

(2) The grantee shall initiate a Full-Scale Public Participation Program as soon as the determination in paragraph (c)(1) of this section is made. Generally, the determination should be made before or at the time of award of the Step 1 grant. However, if the Regional Administrator's determination under paragraph (c)(1) of this section to require a Full-Scale Public Participation Program occurs after initiation of facilities planning because of newly discovered circumstances, the grantee shall initiate and expanded public participation program at that point. The Regional Administrator shall assure that the expanded program is at least as inclusive as a normal Full-Scale Public Participation Program, except for constraints imposed by facilities planning activities that have already been completed. If the project is segmented, the Regional Administrator shall look at the project as a whole when considering whether to require a Full-Scale Public Participation Program.

(3) In conducting the Full-Scale Public Participation Program, the grantee shall at a minimum:

(i) Institute and maintain, throughout the facilities planning process, a public information program, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.4 and § 35.917-5(a);

(ii) Notify and consult with the public, during the development of the plan of study, about the nature and scope of the proposed facilities planning project. EPA encourages the grantee to consult with the public in the selection of the professional consulting engineer;

(iii) Include, in the plan of study submitted with the Step 1 grant application, brief outline of the public participation program, noting the projected staff and budget resources which will be devoted to public participation, a proposed schedule for public participation activities, types of information and consultation mechanisms that will be used, and the segments of the public that the grantee has targeted for involvement;

(iv) Designate or hire a public participation coordinator and establish an advisory group, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.7, immediately upon acceptance of the Step 1 grant award.

(v) Submit to EPA, within 45 days after the date of acceptance of the step 1 grant award and after consultation with the advisory group, a brief Public Participation Work Plan. In addition to meeting the requirements of 40 CFR 25.11, the Work Plan shall describe the method for coordination between the appropriate Water Quality Management agency public participation program under subpart G of this part, and the grantee's public participation program as required by 40 CFR 35.917-5(e). The grantee shall distribute the Work Plan, accompanied by a fact sheet on the project, to groups and individuals who may be interested in or affected by the project. The fact sheet shall describe the nature, scope and location of the project; identify the consulting engineer and grantee staff contact; and include a preliminary estimate of the total costs of the project, including debt service and operation and maintenance, and of the resulting costs to each affected household;

(vi) Hold a public meeting to consult with the public, in accordance with 40

CFR 25.6, early in the facilities planning process when assessing the existing and future situations, and identifying and screening alternatives, but before selection of alternatives for evaluation according to the Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Guidelines (see Appendix A, Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Guidelines, paragraph 5). Following the public meeting, the grantee shall prepare and distribute a responsiveness summary, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.8;

(vii) Hold a public meeting to consult with the public, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.6, when alternatives are largely developed but before an alternative or plan has been selected, and then prepare and circulate a responsiveness summary, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.8;

(viii) Hold a public hearing prior to final adoption of the facilities plan, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.5. This public hearing may be held in conjunction with the public hearing on the draft Environmental Impact Statement under 40 CFR part 6.

(ix) Include, in the final facilities plan, a final responsiveness summary, in accordance with 40 CFR 25.8.

(d) *Exemptions from public participation requirements.* (1) Upon written request of the grantee, the Regional Administrator may exempt projects in which only minor upgrading of treatment works or minor sewer rehabilitation is anticipated according to the State Project Priority List from the requirements of the Basic and Full-Scale Public Participation Programs under paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, except for the public hearing and public disclosure of costs. Before granting any exemption, the Regional Administrator shall issue a public notice of intent to waive the above requirements containing the facts of the situation and shall allow 30 days for response. If responses indicate that serious local issues exist, then the Regional Administrator shall deny the exemption request.

(2) During the facilities planning process, if the Regional Administrator determines that the project no longer meets the exemption criteria stated above, the grantee, in consultation with the Regional Administrator, shall

undertake public participation activities commensurate with the appropriate public participation program but adjusted for constraints imposed by facilities planning activities that have already been completed.

(3) If a project is segmented, the Regional Administrator shall look at the project as a whole when considering any petition for exemption.

(e) *Relationship between facilities planning and other environmental protection programs.* Where possible, the grantee shall further the integration of facilities planning and related environmental protection programs by coordinating the facilities planning public participation program with public participation activities carried out under other programs. At a minimum, the grantee shall provide for a formal liaison between the facilities planning advisory group (or the grantee, where there is no advisory group) and any areawide advisory group established under subpart G of this part. The Regional Administrator may request review of the facilities plan by any appropriate State or areawide advisory group in association with the facilities plan review required by 40 CFR 35.1522.

(f) *Mid-project evaluation.* In accordance with 40 CFR 25.12(a)(2), EPA shall, in conjunction with other regular oversight responsibilities, conduct a mid-project review of compliance with public participation requirements.

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§ 35.917-6 Acceptance by implementing governmental units.

A facilities plan submitted for approval shall include adopted resolutions or, where applicable, executed agreements of the implementing governmental units, including Federal facilities, or management agencies which provide for acceptance of the plan, or assurances that it will be carried out, and statements of legal authority necessary for plan implementation. The Regional Administrator may approve any departures from these requirements before the plan is submitted.

§ 35.917-7 State review and certification of facilities plan.

Each facilities plan must be submitted to the State agency for review. The State must certify that:

- (a) The plan conforms with requirements set forth in this subpart;
- (b) The plan conforms with any existing final basin plans approved under section 303(e) of the Act;
- (c) Any concerned 208 planning agency has been given the opportunity to comment on the plan; and
- (d) The plan conforms with any waste treatment management plan approved under section 208(b) of the Act.

§ 35.917-8 Submission and approval of facilities plan.

The State agency must submit the completed facilities plan for the Regional Administrator's approval. Where deficiencies in a facilities plan are discovered, the Regional Administrator shall promptly notify the State and the grantee or applicant in writing of the nature of such deficiencies and of the recommended course of action to correct such deficiencies. Approval of a plan of study or a facilities plan will not constitute an obligation of the United States for any step 2, step 3, or step 2=3 project.

§ 35.917-9 Revision or amendment of facilities plan.

A facilities plan may provide the basis for several subsequent step 2, step 3, or step 2=3 projects. A facilities plan which has served as the basis for the award of a grant for a step 2, step 3, or step 2=3 project shall be reviewed before the award of any grant for a subsequent project involving step 2 or step 3 to determine if substantial changes have occurred. If the Regional Administrator decides substantial changes have occurred which warrant revision or amendment, the plan shall be revised or amended and submitted for review in the same manner specified in this subpart.

§ 35.918 Individual systems.

(a) For references to individual systems, the following definitions apply:

- (1) *Individual systems.* Privately owned alternative wastewater treatment works (including dual waterless/